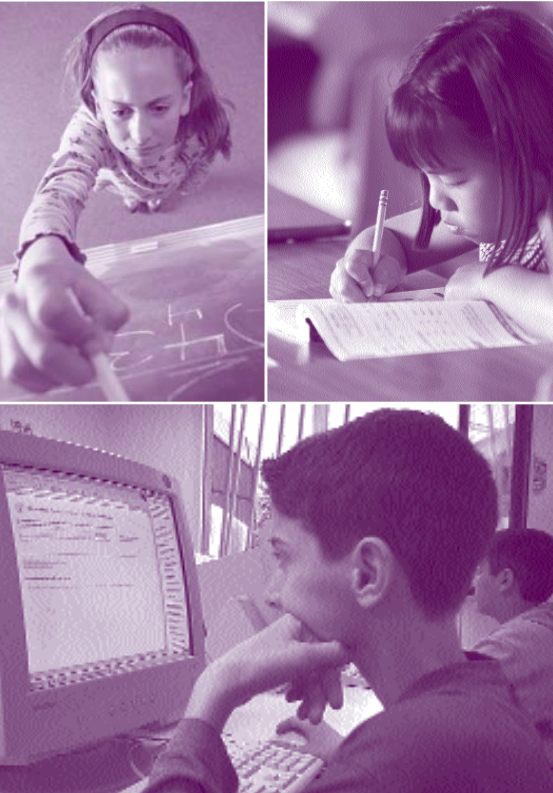


State Representative **Terry Goodin**



Session Report



☒ The New State Budget

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☒ Reorganizing Government

INDIANA'S NEW BUDGET

School Funding Cuts and Increased Property Taxes



Residents across the 66th House District will see little or no relief from the new biennial state budget passed by the majority party in the legislature.

With the 2005 legislative session complete, the majority party is crowing that it has achieved great successes, but those legislators have not told you about the terrible price their handiwork on the new state budget will exact on the lives of Hoosiers of all ages. I am willing to give them all the credit for what that budget does: increases property taxes for homeowners, cuts education funding and deprives area seniors of the in-home health care services they need.

The destruction that will be caused by this budget will be lasting and severe. This budget is one that I did not support and I will not defend.

While supporters claim that the budget increases funding for area schools, what they aren't telling you is that the increases are coming primarily from local property taxes rather than direct state support.

In order to provide full funding for area schools, our fiscal experts estimate local property taxes will have to grow by nearly \$12 million. These local increases come because the majority party leadership refused to provide a minimum guarantee of state support. A minimum guarantee would have helped schools receive critical funding. House leadership also ignored my proposal which would have increased school funding while keeping property taxes low. The result is a budget

that will produce large property tax increases for several school districts and cuts for other districts. Since education is a state obligation, a more equitable school funding formula should have been adopted.

This budget hurts children because the funding levels will force school officials to cut programs and personnel, while increasing property taxes.

Local property taxes also will rise because the budget caps the amount that can be received through Property Tax Replacement Credits (PTRC), the program that brought tax relief to property owners. This budget hurts property taxpayers because it represents a complete reversal from the bipartisan efforts made in recent sessions to reduce the influence of property taxes as a means to fund critical local services.

Another vital state program that will be hampered by the budget is CHOICE, which provides home health care services for the elderly and disabled. Since there are no increases in funding, more than 1,800 people in this area will have to remain on a waiting list to get the in-home care they deserve.

These problems typify what is wrong with this budget. It will cause real pain for Hoosiers of all ages, it is being balanced on the backs of our children and Hoosier property taxpayers. This budget is so bad that I think it should carry a black box label stating: **Warning: This budget will cause huge property tax increases.**



Fighting Crime

Senate Bill 164 will require a person convicted of possession of child pornography with a prior conviction for the same offense to register as a sex offender.

House Bill 1057 makes it a Class C infraction for a person in the passenger compartment of a motor vehicle to possess an alcoholic beverage container that has been opened, has a broken seal or from which some of the contents have been removed.

House Bill 1099 will make the offense of voyeurism a Class D felony instead of a Class B misdemeanor if a person is convicted of the offense a subsequent time.

Senate Bill 525 authorizes the state to seek a sentence of life imprisonment without parole for a person who commits a Class A felony constituting a sex offense against a child and who also has a prior unrelated Class A felony conviction for a sex offense against a child.



MOMENT OF SILENCE, PLEDGE IN SCHOOL PASSED

Senate Bill 332, legislation which I co-sponsored, will allow a daily opportunity for students to voluntarily say the Pledge of Allegiance and observe a moment of silence in public school classrooms in Indiana. The measure passed out of the House of Representatives by a vote of 86 to 6 and has been signed by the governor.

I am very proud that the House saw the importance of this legislation and overwhelmingly voted for its approval.

A student can choose not to participate in either the pledge or the moment of silence. The bill also states that each classroom must have a United States flag on display.



This bill gives us the opportunity to teach our children the values of the community in which they live. Schools are not only about educating our children for the workforce, but about educating our children for the future lives they will lead. I believe a good, productive life is built on a strong base of morals and values.

Reorganizing Government

Indiana now has a state Department of Agriculture and Office of Rural Affairs, as well as a Department of Homeland Security. House Democrats also stood firm to prevent the governor from proceeding with a plan to eliminate citizen participation in government by getting rid of hundreds of state boards and commissions.

Blood Typing

You will be able to request that your blood type be placed on your driver's license, driver's permit or other identification card.



Protecting Victims

Victims will be automatically notified when offenders are released from prison or have their status changed. Offenders on home detention will be ordered to wear monitoring devices that constantly track their location.

Alternate Fuels

Whenever possible, state government vehicles will be required to run on agriculture-based fuels, such as biodiesel, ethanol or gasohol.

Helping Survivors

The surviving spouse and children of Indiana State Police officers who are killed in the line of duty will be able to receive health care coverage.

Speed Limits

Hoosier drivers soon will be able to go faster on major roadways in Indiana. Effective July 1, speed limits on rural sections of interstate highways will increase from 65 to 70 mph for cars and 60 to 65 mph for trucks. Speed limits on four-lane divided highways will increase from 55 to 60 mph if the Indiana Department of Transportation does a study to ensure the safety of higher speeds on those roads.



Protecting Firefighters

Volunteer firefighters and emergency medical technicians will not be penalized by their employers for being absent when they are responding to emergency calls.



Inspector General

Fraud and corruption in state government will be investigated by an inspector general created through a new state law approved in 2005. Thanks to changes championed by House Democrats, this inspector will work with locally-elected prosecutors and judges to look into charges of wrongdoing and determine whether to proceed with criminal charges.

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2005 Session Highlights



Addressing legislation he co-authored, Representative Goodin explains his House bill.



Prior to casting his vote, Representative Goodin listens to comments.



Representative Goodin listens to a legislative debate on a proposed bill.



Representative Goodin speaks on a bill in the chamber of the House of Representatives.

Representative Terry Goodin

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